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THE MINISTRY MAGNIFIED.

A SERMON

PREACHED AT THE

INSTALLATION OF REV. C. HOOVER,

AS PASTOR OF THE

CENTRAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,

NEWARK, N. J.

BY THE REV. DAVID MAGIE,

OF ELIZABETHTOWN, N. J.

Published at the joint request of the Presbytery of Newark, and the Trustees of said Church.

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PUBLISHED BY THE CENTRAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

John F. Trow, Printer, 13 Jo[illegible]st, New-York.

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SERMON.

ROMANS II. 13.—I magnify mine office.

MY theme, as you all perceive, has been suggested by the occasion. We are met, as a Presbytery, in accordance with the provisions of our form of Church Government, to unite a minister and a people together as Pastor and flock. The relation is interesting in itself, and momentous in its consequences. What we do this evening will surely come up in review, with all its unnumbered influences and results, at the great and final day.

What then could be better adapted to the service before us, than the words I have just repeated? If this brother and this Church are to derive any important blessings from the connection which is now to be formed between them, they must both form proper views of the nature and the import of the Christian ministry. He will need this to know how to labour, and they will need it to know how to profit by his labours.

We do not wish to see our beloved friend magnify himself, but he may magnify his office. Paul did this. This wonderful man, distinguished as he was for the most unaffected lowliness of mind, had learned to set a very high value upon his calling, as an ambassador of Christ. He would not have given up this delightful work for the throne and the diadem of the Cæsars.

Why then should the office of the ministry be magnified? and *how* should ministers magnify their office? To these two points let me solicit your serious attention for a few minutes.

I. WHY IS THE OFFICE OF THE MINISTRY TO BE MAGNIFIED?

One reason why this office should be magnified IS ITS GREAT PRESENT USEFULNESS TO MANKIND.

On this topic it cannot be necessary to dwell. Probably nineteen-twentieths of all the intelligent and respectable men in the community, regard the ministry of the Gospel as the grand ornament, and chief support of virtue's cause. Almost universal suffrage would go as far as this. It is difficult for either the moralist or the novel writer to draw a picture of a quiet, sober, industrious, and happy neighbourhood, in which the parish minister has no place. Indeed, the attempt is scarcely ever made. Take up any finished description you please, of rural contentment or village peacefulness, and you will find a large space given to the labours and sympathies of the minister. No good man can long occupy such a position without leaving traces of his usefulness. He is connected, from

the very nature of his calling, with all the endearments of social and domestic life, and his influence is exerted under the very circumstances adapted to give it most power. His lessons, from day to day, and from Sabbath to Sabbath, tend both to mend the manners and to soften the heart. As the effect of his labours, husbands look upon their wives with purer affection, wives lean upon their husbands with augmented confidence, parents are more kind, and children more dutiful, and brothers and sisters dwell together in sweeter unity. People do better without almost any thing, than without a kind-hearted, faithful minister. Ride through the country, in whatever direction you choose, and tell me, can you find a single peaceful town, or virtuous village, that is not blessed with the toils and cheered by the influences of such a man? There can be no mistake here. Men must give up the Sabbath to idleness and dissipation, and consign their children to ignorance and infamy, or provide themselves with a faithful minister of the gospel. On this ground alone, the calling claims to be respected.

Again.—THE OFFICE SHOULD BE MAGNIFIED BECAUSE IT DEMANDS GREAT RESPECTABILITY OF PERSONAL CHARACTER.

This is a matter in which all classes of men, the bad as well as the good, agree. No minister among us, can expect to maintain his standing or influence for a single year, unless he is careful to illustrate by his life what he teaches in his

sermons. The people require their Pastor to be an example of the virtues which he recommends to them. Neither weakness nor wickedness can, in our day, and among Protestant Christians, be concealed by robes of office, nor can it be taken for granted that the goodness of the calling will make up for the badness of the man. As has been quaintly remarked, a Minister may easily cut the throat of what he says in the pulpit, by what he does out of it. An ignorant, vain, rash, imprudent man, had better do any thing in the world than preach the gospel. There is too much intelligence abroad in the land, and men are too eagle-eyed to the faults of the ministry, for any one to hope to be permanently useful without a fair character. No other office on earth demands such purity of heart, and such consistency of deportment. Men will not be rebuked for sin by one who himself indulges in sin, or exhorted to lay up a treasure in heaven by one who gives evidence that he himself minds earthly things. The people cannot be expected to rise above their teacher. If the flock is to exhibit the graces of the spirit, the shepherd must put on bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, and long suffering. Pride, rudeness, and levity, are never more out of place, than when found under the garb of the Christian Ministry. You could scarcely find a congregation, so lost to all sense of propriety and self-respect, as to be willing to have a Pastor with any radical defects of this sort. The office, even

in the estimation of careless men, is too sacred to be committed to impure hands. There is felt to be a sanctity in the calling, which ought never to be dissevered from a corresponding sanctity in the character and deportment of him who fills it. An intelligent, faithful, consistent Minister of the Gospel will be respected. The attempts of vile people to weaken his hands and mar his usefulness, like Balaam's going about from mountain to hill to curse Israel, will only brighten his reputation, and increase his influence. Such a man may be opposed, but he can never be despised.

Again.—He should magnify the office because it is an office, in a peculiar sense from, God.

If the days of miracles are gone by, it is not so with those of providence and grace. We regard it as a fundamental point, that every minister of the gospel is called of God to this work, just as much as Aaron was to the exercise of his Priesthood, though not in precisely the same way. The Lord of the vineyard selects labourers for that vineyard. Paul's purest, best, holiest feelings were awakened, when he thanked God for putting him into the ministry. By a series of providential dispensations, such as the individual himself can scarcely misinterpret, and by the secret drawings of the Spirit, men are separated to the service of God in the gospel of his Son. To them it is given, by authority which none can dispute, to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ. They are sent by Him, who is higher than all the kings of the earth, to make proclamation of mercy to a lost

world—to urge sinners of every age and name to believe and be saved. No other embassy can trace its origin so directly to the counsels of Heaven. We are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. The grand business of this order of men is to act in the name, and on the behalf of the Redeemer himself. They stand in his place in the pulpit, occupy his seat at the Lord's table, and deliver his message in their sermons. The commission which they hold in their hands is from one, who has upon his vesture, and upon his thigh a name written, King of kings, and Lord of lords. Their office and their master are so conjoined that men cannot honour the one without honouring the other.

Again.—THIS OFFICE OUGHT TO BE MAGNIFIED ON ACCOUNT OF THE IMPORTANT INTERESTS WITH WHICH IT HAS TO DO.

Every minister labours for the soul, and his work takes hold on Eternity. The very object for which he is sent forth, is to open blind eyes, and to turn men from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. Never should he forget that the grand design of his high calling is to save sinners from ruin. To-day he is called to visit some careless family, for the purpose of warning them to flee from the wrath to come. To-morrow he meets with a lovely youth, just beginning to ask what he must do to inherit eternal life. The day after he is approached by a man struggling under a burden of guilt, and despondency of more than a

mountain's weight. Now you see him by the side of a sick bed, using his utmost skill, and bringing out from the Bible all that is tender and terrible, for the sake of awakening emotion. Again he is found helping some devout believer's joy, and opening the very portals of bliss to the admiring view of the dying saint. When you next meet him he is found sitting in the midst of an afflicted group, and in tones of angel sweetness talking to the comfort of those whom God has wounded. He watches for souls as one who must give account. How solemn and weighty is his office, if measured by the magnitude of the interests which it involves? No other calling is connected with interests so tender, and so enduring.

One more.—THE OFFICE OF THE MINISTRY CANNOT BE TOO MUCH MAGNIFIED IF WE LOOK AT ITS AFFECTING RESULTS.

It has suspended upon it issues of a momentous character. Is the Preacher of the gospel a spiritual physician?—he has to prescribe for cases which may reach their crisis in a day, or an hour. Is he a merchant?—his commerce is in goodly pearls, and he freights his vessel with that which is of more value than a world. Is he a husbandman?—the seed which he goes forth weeping to sow, is to produce a harvest, either of glory, or of shame and everlasting contempt. His plans are laid, and his labours performed with a view to the retributions of Eternity. Thousands, and perhaps tens of thousands, to whose destiny he has been instrumental in giving shape and colour, are to meet him at the

bar of God, there to rejoice, or to mourn over the influences of his ministry. All its grand issues and results will be spread out before the universe. His office will be seen to be a momentous one, where multitudes through its instrumentality shall find themselves just going to wear the crown, and sing the praises of the heavenly world. Nor will it seem to be less momentous, when perhaps upon still larger numbers, it shall be found to have drawn down an aggravated condemnation. The ministry of the man is closed, but its influence will be felt both in heaven and hell, and felt through eternity. As often as the ransomed of his flock raise their voices in notes of praise, they will think of the kind pastor, who so gladly turned their feet into the way of peace. And as often too as the cup of trembling shall be put to the lips of the lost among his people, will it revive the remembrance of one, who laboured for their salvation.

Stop then and weigh these several considerations for one moment. Look at the usefulness of the Christian ministry, at the respectability of character which it demands, at its divine origin, at the important interests which it contemplates—and at its grand and awful results—and tell me, ought not the office to be magnified? To speak of it in terms of ridicule, or to attempt in any way to lessen its efficiency among men, argues a weak head as well as a bad heart. The office is honourable, and ought every where to be so regarded. But after all, the proper elevation of ministerial character and standing in the view of the people,

must depend very much upon the temper and spirit of those, who act in this capacity.

This brings us to inquire 2d. How MINISTERS SHOULD MAGNIFY THEIR OFFICE.

There are many ways of doing this, one of which is to CHERISH EXALTED VIEWS OF THE NATURE OF THE OFFICE, AND ITS GREAT OBJECTS.

Blessed be God—said the ardent and devoted Martyn—I feel myself to be his minister. To preach the gospel, even in the most obscure corner of the earth, is a high calling, and the man that desires to do it, desires a good work. He cannot estimate the service to which the Holy Ghost has separated him above its real magnitude. This is not a business to be pursued for the sake of rising into popular favour, or gaining the wealth and honours of the world. That minister will always best magnify his office, who succeeds most effectually in turning the attention of the people from himself, to the cause he advocates. Like the priest in the Jewish sacrifices, he must be hidden behind the cloud of incense which rises from his own censer. It is honour enough for any good man to preach the gospel of Christ. Let him do this faithfully, and as one who expects soon to meet his people at the bar of God, and his office can never come into disrepute. The grand purpose of his life is to convert men to God, and his arguments for the attainments of this object are drawn from the burning mountain, and the bloody hill. This is an office that he cannot, like Balaam, barter for gold, nor like Diotrephes, make a step-

ping stone to power. Every solicitation to turn aside from his proper work, as a minister of Christ he will steadfastly repel. You will not hear him crying, lo! here, and lo! there, or find him attempting to gain attention by strangeness, rather than by excellence. He has too much regard for his office to pursue any other than an open, manly, consistent course. If friends forsake him, and bitter opposition arise, he finds comfort in the reflection that he is God's servant, and must stand or fall to his own master. He loves his work for its own sake, and sooner would he wither his right arm than think lightly of it. You will not find him growing restive, and impatiently inquiring for a new field of labour, because obstacles lie in his way, and he does not meet with much immediate success. Year after year is he the same humble, stable man, let him be either hindered or helped. He knows what it is to have dark hours, but his heart relies upon the sure word of promise, and thus is he kept quietly waiting for the salvation of the Lord. Such a man cannot but be regarded as a credit to his calling. Let his position be ever so retired, or the sphere of his influence ever so small, he will earn a name, which will be had in everlasting remembrance.

Another method of magnifying this office is TO BE WELL QUALIFIED FOR THE DISCHARGE OF ITS DUTIES.

The honour of the calling, be it ever remembered, is but an appendage to the work of the calling. A service so sacred in its character, and so solemn

in its results may well be supposed to require endowments, and attainments, both of mind and heart, of no ordinary character. How exhausting are the demands daily made upon the strength, and resources of a Christian minister! What a multitude of cares press upon him—what a variety of topics has he to discuss—and what a range of thought is it necessary for him to employ? Never can he make full proof of his ministry, unless he be a man of God thoroughly furnished unto every good work. Talents, natural and acquired, are needed here, and here they have scope for the fullest exercise. A faithful minister of Christ feels that he has no time to be idle. Every wakeful hour should be employed either in doing, or in getting good—either in adding to the good treasure of his heart, or in bringing out from it, things both new and old. He does not look for rest this side of heaven—Till he dies his wish is to be a student. He will be learning from the air, the land and the waters, and seeking daily to enrich his store with collections from the top of Parnassus, as well as from the brow of Calvary. Buonaparte acted upon this principle. Never could he enter a new city or country, without at once thinking where would be a good place for a castle or a camp, and how he might seize upon this point for defence, and upon that for annoyance. Just so in a sanctified sense should it be with every Preacher of the gospel. We live at a period when men can no longer draw around themselves the folds of their official dignity and exert a permanent influence without a high

degree of mental and moral culture. Theirs is a service for which they must always be ready. Now and then a splendid effort, or an occasional display of genius and imagination will not secure an abiding hold upon the affections and respects of the people. The credit of the minister can never be long sustained, when there is no proper fitness for the labour of the ministry. What but their sanctified talent, has handed down the names of Baxter, and Owen, and Doddridge, and Edwards, and Scott with such lasting honour? Mind can never cause its power over mind to be fully felt without long and patient culture. Other things being equal, the man of vigorous and well-trained intellect, will always succeed best in adorning the character of his high calling.

Again. Ministers may magnify their office BY EXEMPLARY FIDELITY IN ALL THE DETAILS OF THEIR PROPER WORK.

Bishop, in its original import, is not a title without toil, or a revenue without care of souls. It implies watchfulness, inspection, oversight. The overseer of the flock of God, is to feed it with the bread of life, which cometh down from heaven. This comprises every thing. The doctrines of the gospel are to be preached plainly and faithfully, however they may disturb the self-complacency, or offend the pride of carnal men. Its duties are to be inculcated with unrelaxing strictness, whatever be their contrariety to the ways of a wicked world. Nothing either of faith or practice is to be kept back. Every good Minister of

Jesus Christ will take his stand upon the plain and unsophisticated word of truth, and warn men from God, as one who neither fears their frowns, nor courts their smiles. He will not be content with the performance of merely official duty; every where, and at all times will he be a Minister of the gospel; in the parlour as well as in the pulpit, and through the week as well as on the Sabbath. You will meet him in the hovel of poverty as often as in the mansion of opulence. His object is to commend himself to every man's conscience in the sight of God. So impressed is he with the dignity of his own calling that he goes forward in it, without timidity, reserve, subterfuge, or concealment. Difficulties do not dishearten him, nor does opposition unnerve his arm. As an angel of mercy he moves around among his people, dispensing blessings wherever he goes, and causing the heart of the widow and the orphan to leap for joy. His object is to be familiar and easy, and at the same time, never to render himself cheap or common. Fidelity with him is not rudeness, nor does his sense of duty lead him to disregard the proper decencies and courtesies of life. His people view him as a kind-hearted, Christian gentleman, influenced to seek their welfare by choice, as well as office. This gives him access to their hearts, and aids him greatly in the work of doing them good. His honest, upright, benevolent course, wins the admiration of multitudes, to whom after all he is only a savour of death unto death.

Another way in which Ministers may magnify their office, is, BY MANIFESTING A FIRM RELIANCE ON THE PROPER EFFICACY OF THE GOSPEL.

This is the grand instrument by which God is accomplishing his everlasting purposes of mercy, and working salvation in the midst of earth. It does not belong to ministers to make experiments for the relief of human wo, or the removal of human guilt. They do not come forth to a world of dying men as a physician approaches a patient, whose case he does not comprehend, and for whom he is in doubt what to prescribe. The gospel is a specific, in the true sense of the term, and whenever it is cordially received, never fails to work a complete and radical cure. Our hearers, dead in trespasses and sins, are hastening on to the judgment, and the awful retributions of eternity. We have a commission to go and proclaim in their ears the full ability, and the boundless compassion of the Redeeming Saviour. This is heaven's sole appointed remedy, and on it is every preacher of the gospel to rely. His chief business consists in directing sinners of every age and name to the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world. It is below the true dignity of his office to turn aside for the sake of catching attention, or awakening curiosity. A respect for his own high calling, and a thorough conviction of the perfect adaptation of the simple gospel to work its appropriate results, will not fail to preserve him from every thing like startling novelty, or bold manœuvre. The stream of his com-

passion for impenitence runs too deep to gurgle or foam. Though he mourn day after day over the dreadful obduracy of the human heart, still he feels that he has no expedient to resort to, but the application of the gospel. You may see him taking his position at the foot of the cross, and pointing men to its bleeding victim. Here they must find relief or die. In the great work of building up the spiritual temple of the Lord, his aim is to do every thing according to the pattern showed to him in the Bible. He does not mix the wine of Sodom with the cup of salvation. With the gospel in his hand, and the promise of the Spirit as his encouragement, he can go forth and prophesy to the dry bones of the valley, without the least fear or misgiving. In doing this he expects divine help: for the same lips which gave the command—Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature—uttered also the promise—Lo! I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. The encouragement is as large as the duty; the support commensurate with the service.

Once more—MINISTERS MAY MAGNIFY THEIR OFFICE BY ZEAL AND FERVOUR IN THIS WORK.

It is humiliating to think that there should be any room for the taunting remark of a celebrated actor. He was asked why people listened with so much emotion to the *fictions* of the stage, while they sat with such disheartening apathy under the awful *truths* of the pulpit. His reply was—We deliver fiction like truth, but you ministers

deliver truth like fiction. Every one must see that there is a sad incongruity in speaking about God, and Christ, and sin, and eternity, in such a way as to leave our hearers in doubt whether we really believe our own message. It is as true now as it ever was, that the readiest way to make others weep, is to weep ourselves. Talents are useful. High attainments are useful. But to make talents and attainments yield their full fruits, there must be fervour of spirit. A serious, affectionate, warm-hearted minister will win upon the regards of a people, and be a blessing to them, where a cold, phlegmatic man can do nothing. It is cruel to stand with unconcern, and tell sinners that he that believeth not must be damned. We are not with feelings of chilling indifference, to lead men to Gethsemane and Calvary, and show them the agonies and the blood of those affecting scenes. If we speak of the Judge, and the great white throne, and the assembled universe—if we bid men to hearken to the words of Christ, as he pronounces the destiny of the righteous and the wicked —if we draw aside the veil, and tell them to look in upon the joys of the saved, and the wailings of the lost, we must feel what we say. What ministers need, is a tender, sympathetic spirit. Only let them have this, and every word, every action, every look, every tear will be eloquent. I have no wish—said the excellent Leigh Richmond—to be a popular preacher in any sense but one, namely, a preacher to the hearts of the people. This is the only popularity worth a single thought.

And now Fathers and Brethren of this Presbytery, you see your calling, and how it is in your own power to magnify it. Cherish a high value for your office; court earnestly the best gifts; be exemplary in every duty; rely on the simple gospel, and preach it with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, and the ministry will never fall into disrepute in your hands. I speak freely on this great subject, because I address men whom I love in the Lord. My heart tells me that it is as your heart, in all your prayers and toils for the upbuilding of Christ's kingdom, and this emboldens me to be frank and open.

It is not to be concealed that we are fallen upon times of peculiar difficulty for the magnifying of our office. No attentive observer, whether in the church or out of it, can help seeing that there is something in the present state of things, calculated to lower ministerial character, and circumscribe ministerial usefulness. The same amount of talent and piety will not go so far now as it did in the days of our fathers. One reason, and perhaps the main reason of this, is, that Ministers even at the same common altars, no longer labour together, and pray together as they did in former times. In multitudes of cases, they have ceased to respect each other, and how can they look for the respect of other men?

Much as I feel encouraged to repose in your confidence, I hardly dare trust myself to say all I feel on this distressing topic. With parties as such, it is perhaps best to have nothing to do; but

who can overlook the consequences of these unhappy discussions? You have probably heard of the two large bodies of forces, which fell in with each other, on a certain dark and gloomy night. A battle immediately ensued, and the contest was fierce and bloody. Great was the slaughter on both sides, and both sides were on the point of claiming the victory, when lo! as the day broke they found to their astonishment that they were actually divisions of the same army, fighting for the same country, and under the direction of the same general. They had been doing, in the dark, their enemies' work, and weakening the very cause which they wished to support. The moral of this is plain.

Because of contention Zion mourns. There is such a total prostration of mutual confidence, that our Church seems on the very eve of dismemberment, and the glory of the Lord has gone up from the house of the Lord. On every side we hear the loud lamentation—Where is the Lord God of our former revivals? Nor is this the worst. So long as whisperings, backbitings, and tumults continue, our Church can never move forward prominently and gloriously in the work of the world's conversion. Men of blood are not to build the temple of God. "For the divisions of Reuben there were great searchings of heart," and that tribe had not the honour of overthrowing Jabin and Sisera in the high places of the field. The very miseries of the heathen implore us to cease our unholy strifes.

Do you ask—What is to be done? This is a question which I feel incompetent to answer. But one thing to me is plain. Separation, in the present posture of affairs, will never work a cure. Were our Church this day divided into two parties, there would be almost equal necessity for a third, and perhaps a fourth. We cannot go with either of the extremes.

As for giving up any thing of the truth or order of the gospel, we never may, and we never can. The doctrines of our standards, and of our pious forefathers, are doctrines which we must love and preach till we die. Be it far from us ever to explain away the connection between the sinfulness of the race, and the first sin of their great progenitor. We are never to let any system of Philosophy, falsely so called, rob us of our reliance on the atoning blood, and perfect righteousness of the Redeemer. It is impossible for us to give up the special agency of the Divine Spirit in changing the heart of man. These are the doctrines which we have too frequently seen working salvation in our churches, ever to abandon. We might as well renounce our Bibles, as to give up these cardinal truths.

Nay, we are prepared to go even further. We say, and we say it openly, and in the face of the world, that we wish to encourage no measures which have not the plain sanction of the Bible, and of long experience. On this subject we have nothing to keep back. What was done by the loved and venerated men, who occupied these pul-

pits twenty years ago, is just what we desire to do, and no more. We are content to walk in the footsteps of the flock. Father and Brethren, are not these the feelings of your hearts?

But learn to contend for these old ways only in love. If compelled in the providence of God to enter the field of controversy, go forth I entreat you in the armour of an Israelite, and not in that of an uncircumcised Philistine. Let this be the inscription on your banner—the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. Maintain this spirit, and though called to stand in the fore-front of the hottest battle, you will bring no discredit upon either your character or your office. Paul was a controversialist, and so was Edwards, but they never tarnished their reputation by it. Close and cogent as were their arguments, and weak and worthless as they made the opinions of their antagonists to appear, they never were betrayed into a forgetfulness of what was due to themselves as Christian ministers. Here was no subterfuge, or sly attack, but all was open, and bold, and manly. Follow such examples, and you cannot fail to magnify your office.

After all, it is not safe for most ministers to embark in warm controversy. Such is their want of equanimity, and self controul, that they seldom fail to injure, not only themselves, but the very cause which they espouse. The good done is a hundred times overbalanced by the direct, obvious and wide-spread evils which are seen to follow.

Let me tell you how this matter appears in the

near prospect of heaven. A few weeks before the death of the lamented Nevins, I had the high privilege of making him a visit. I found him calm and tranquil, but more deeply, and I might almost say, awfully solemn than any man I ever saw. After a few remarks about the nearness of the eternal world, the unprofitableness of his own ministery, and the desire he sometimes felt to be spared for a little further service, he fixed his piercing eyes full upon me, and in the most impressive manner charged me never to take an active part in the contentions of our beloved church, but to content myself with simply preaching Christ. This he repeated with an emphasis and an urgency which I hope never to forget. Those of you who knew the man can imagine how he appeared, and what a penetration there was in his manner, and the tones of his voice. It was altogether such a scene as I could wish my own heart, and the heart of every brother in the ministry, to be affected with.

What we need then to magnify our office, and to give increased efficiency to our ministry, is more of the meek, humble, and devoted spirit of our blessed Master. Have you ever thought how Baxter was instrumental of bringing almost every family of an immense congregation, to be a family of daily prayer? Read his Saints' Rest, and notice the deep devotion of every one of its pages, and the secret is found out. Did you ever inquire what it was in the preaching of Brainard that made the wild and hardy savage throw down his tomahawk, and cry for mercy! Examine his Diary, and see

him on his knees in the wilderness, and the mystery is solved. Has it ever entered your minds to stop and ask, where Payson's great strength lay? Look yonder and behold his tears as he meets an impenitent Parishioner by the way side; the question is answered. These men walked with God. They lived near the mercy seat—they magnified their office.

Fathers, brethren, friends, look forward a few years, and what do we behold? These desks are filled by other preachers, and these beloved flocks are fed by other hands. The sun shines, and the cold winds of heaven blow, upon our graves. And what, O what traces of usefulness shall we leave behind us? May we hope to live in the grateful recollection of survivors, and speak after we are dead? Ten, twenty, thirty years hence shall there be persons rising up in our parishes, to tell how kindly we warned them, and how sweetly we led their feet into the way of peace? Lord God of our fathers, grant this, and we ask no more.

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